

September 19, 1999

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CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth #1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Program Planners,

As a farmer and agrobusinessman in Northern California, I will be very much affected by the decisions you make on the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. In fact, I believe the future of my farm, my family, and the welfare of the general public of California depends on you reaching a farsighted and well-informed policy. As you have requested public comment, I offer the following up close and personal views of your preliminary planning documents.

Water transfer is NOT the answer. Retiring farmland is NOT sound judgement. Expecting agriculture to 'do their fair share' and allow water to be transferred is an uninformed and biased philosophy. Increased water storage is the answer.

State and Federal Agencies are going to have to come to the realization that farmers and agriculture cannot give any more. Farmers are in fact becoming an *Endangered Species* and should receive the same concern and thoughtfulness as our environment and our fish. This country started out some 200 years ago having a majority of the population made up of farmers. Now the farmers comprise only several percent of the U.S. population and are still expected to feed and clothe the majority population at bargain prices. This slow but steady loss of farmers is because with every year and every new government policy it is increasingly becoming more difficult for us to financially survive. It should be clear that farmers are vital to California as the food providers to our exploding population and any policy that could adversely affect the viability of farming and the farmer should be avoided at all cost. Water transfer policy endangers the California farmer.

If you cut the water supply to farms by transfer and if you retire farmland you are slowly killing off the California farmer. For years farmers have done their best to give and support water policies and environmental concerns like the CALFED program. This time we must say NO. We do not wish to become extinct. We must maintain our water supply at current levels to remain financially able to survive and to provide for California.

Our future is at stake. CALFED must respond in a farsighted manner. The growing population of the state will need water, the bay and delta will need water, and the farmers do not have water to spare. Increasing water storage in California is the clear and sensible choice. Maintaining water volume to farmers is a California necessity.

Thank You,



Leigh W. McDaniel
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